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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/761,253	01/22/2004	Yoshiki Saitou	US-159	2574

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EXAMINER

OH, TAYLOR V

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1625

DATE MAILED: 08/04/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/761,253

**Applicant(s)**

SAITOU ET AL.

**Examiner**

Taylor Victor Oh

**Art Unit**

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 June 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☒ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/25/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

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The Status of Claims

Claim 1 is pending.

Claim 1 has been rejected.

**DETAILED ACTION**

**Priority**

1. It is noted that the instant application is a continuation of PCT/JP02/06262 (06/24/02); the claim for the foreign priority has been acknowledged ; applicants need to file a certified copy of a foreign priority document, Japan 2001-228882 (07/30/2001), which is not in the file.

**Drawings**

2. The drawing filed on 1/22/04 is accepted by the examiner.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

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In claim 1, the phrase “ the amount of said aqueous solvent being an amount not more than the amount sufficient ” is recited. The expression of “the amount sufficient” is vague and indefinite because the claim does not specify how much amount of the solvent is sufficient. Therefore, an appropriate correction is required.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

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1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ito et al (U.S. 3,565,950).

Ito et al teaches a method of purifying crude crystals of L-glutamic acid by transforming at least 40 %  $\alpha$  crystals of L-glutamic acid at a temperature of 50<sup>0</sup> C or a higher than 50<sup>0</sup> C in an aqueous medium insufficient to dissolve the entire crystals to form the  $\beta$  crystals of L-glutamic acid (see col. 1 ,lines 15-23).

The instant invention ,however, differs from the prior art in that the claimed aqueous solvent system in the coexistence of active carbon is not exemplified.

Even so, the Ito et al reference also indicates that a heavily contaminated liquid may be purified by treatment with activated carbon and returned to the process (see col. 6 , lines 65-68). Therefore, in case of the contaminated crude glutamic acid crystals present in the process, it is quite possible to employ the activated carbon in combination with the aqueous solvent system during the process of purifying L-glutamic acid crystals.

Ito teaches expressly the purification method of crude purifying crystals of L-glutamic acid by transforming at least 40 %  $\alpha$  crystals of L-glutamic acid at a

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temperature of 50<sup>0</sup> C or a higher than 50<sup>0</sup> C in an aqueous medium insufficient to dissolve the entire crystals to form the  $\beta$  crystals of L-glutamic acid.

Furthermore, it is permissible to use the activated carbon in combination with the aqueous solvent system during the process of purifying L-glutamic acid crystals(see col. 6 , lines 65-68). Therefore, it would have been obvious to the skilled artisan in the art to be motivated to combine the activated carbon with the aqueous solvent system during the process of purifying L-glutamic acid crystals because the skilled artisan in the art would expect such a modification to be successful and efficient in removing the impurities present in the crystals.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Taylor Victor Oh whose telephone number is 571-272-0689. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tsang Cecilia can be reached on 571-272-0562. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

*Wang* ✓  
9/3/04

*Chieh Tsay*  
9/3/04